

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed March 3, 2004 has been received and the Examiner's comments carefully reviewed. Claims 19-22 and 26-35 have been allowed. Applicants thank the Examiner for this notification. Claim 23 has been amended. Claims 48-62 have been added. No new subject matter has been added. Claims 1-13, 15-17, 25, and 36-47 have been cancelled. Claims 19-24, 26-35 and 48-62 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for allowance.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner rejected claims 1-6, 7, 10-12, 25, 39-45 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Barth (U.S. Patent 3,312,437). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, but have cancelled claims 1-6, 7, 10-12, 25, and 39-45 to advance this application to allowance. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original subject matter via a continuing application.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner rejected claims 8 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Barth (U.S. Patent 3,312,437) in view of Morin (U.S. Patent 4,101,163). The Examiner also rejected claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Barth (U.S. Patent 3,312,437) in view of Hoover et al. (U.S. Patent 1,976,170). The Examiner further rejected claims 15-17, 36-38, 46 and 47 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Barth (U.S. Patent 3,312,437). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections, but have cancelled claims 8, 9, 13, 15-17, 36-38, 46, and 47 to advance this application to allowance.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 19-22 and 26-35 are allowed. Applicants thank the Examiner for this notification.

The Examiner objected to claims 23 and 24, but indicated that claims 23 and 24 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form incorporating all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for this

notification. Claim 23 has been rewritten in independent form. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 23 and 24 are now in condition for allowance.

New Claims 48-62

New claims 48-50 recite subject matter similar to that of allowed claims 19, 20, and 22; new claims 51 and 52 recite subject matter similar to that of rewritten claims 23 and 24; and new claims 53-62 recite subject matter similar to that of allowed claims 26-35. In each of the new claims, the "post" limitation has been recited as a "support structure." Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 48-62 are patentable.

SUMMARY

It is respectfully submitted that each of the presently pending claims (claims 19-24, 26-35 and 48-62) is in condition for allowance and notification to that effect is requested. The Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the below-listed telephone number if it is believed that prosecution of this application may be assisted thereby.

Although certain arguments regarding patentability are set forth herein, there may be other arguments and reasons why the claimed invention is patentably distinct. Applicants reserve the right to raise these arguments in the future.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: March 24, 2004


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